

Message Text

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15

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SUBJECT: MOVIMENTO UNITARIO POPOLARE; COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE

1. IN CONVERSATION DECEMBER 15 WITH CONGEN, DON GIUSSANI, FOUNDER OF COMUNIONE & LIBERAZIONE (C&L) SAID THAT C&L IS AN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PROMOTING A CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE. ITS SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ARE CARRIED OUT IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE THESE ASPECTS OF SOCIETY COMPATIBLE WITH THE ORGANIZATION'S BASIC GOAL. THE MOVIMENTO UNITARIO POPOLARE (MUP) WAS RELUCTANTLY FOUNDED TO HANDLE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THIS REGARD. C&L HAD HOPED TO BE ABLE TO WORK THROUGH THE EXISTING PARTIES WITHOUT ITS OWN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION BUT CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THIS WOULD NOT HAVE HAD ANY BENEFICIAL RESULTS.

2. MUP IS DOING WELL. THERE ARE TWO APPROACHES BEING FOLLOWED: IN CATANIA A MASS MEETING WAS HELD TO FORM THE GROUP THERE AND ATTRACT MEMBERS. IN MILAN, C&L IS TRYING TO GET VARIOUS DC LEADERS TO JOIN. 5,000 PEOPLE TURNED UP IN CATANIA AND ONCE THE POPULAR APPEAL OF THE MEETING BECAME CLEAR ALL OF THE LOCAL LEADERS INCLUDING SCALIA OF THE CISL LEAP ABOARD. IN MILAN GINO COLOMBO, VITTORINO COLOBO, MINISTER MARCORA, THE JESUITS AND THE LAY INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF
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MILAN ARE BEHIND THE MOVEMENT. EVEN MASSIMO DE CAROLIS HAS

ASKED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE DIRECTORATE.

3. THE MILAN APPROACH RUNS THE RISK, HOWEVER, OF CARRYING THE FACTIONAL DISPUTES OF THE DC INTO THE MUP. THE FOUNDERS OF THE LATTER ARE RELUCTANT TO TAKE DE CAROLIS ABOARD FOR THIS REASON. GIUSSANI SUPPORTS THE CATANIA MASS APPROACH BECAUSE THE ALTERNATIVE RISKS MAKING MUP ONE MORE TACTICAL GROUPING WITH NO REAL POPULAR SUPPORT. IF ANY REJUVENATION OF THE DC IS TO COME ABOUT, IT MUST COME FROM A POPULAR GROUND SWELL AND THE MUP MUST MAINTAIN THIS APPROACH IF IT IS TO BE A VITAL FORCE.

4. THE FOUNDATION OF MUP WILL BE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED DECEMBER 21 IN 30 PROVINCES. THE ORGANIZERS HOPE TO BE SET UP ON A NATIONAL BASIS BY MARCH. GIUSSANI REPEATEDLY SAID HE WAS NOT ACTIVE IN THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF C&L. HE SAID FORMIGONI IS THE PRIMARY DRIVING FORCE BEHIND MUP WITH DON SCOLA AND SANTO BAGNOLI OF JACCA BOOK ALSO ACTIVE. THEY PLAN TO KEEP MUP SEPARATE FROM C&L SO THAT THE LATTER CAN MAINTAIN ITS RELIGIOUS PURITY.

5. FINANCING FOR C&L CONTINUES TO BE FROM THE TITHING OF THE MEMBERSHIP. MUP, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS NO FUNDS AT ALL. C&L HAS BUDGETED 7 MILLION FOR THE GROUP WHICH IT DOES NOT HAVE AND SEES NO HOPE OF GETTING. WHILE GINO COLOMBO ET AL ARE EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH MUP THEY HAVE MADE NO FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, GIUSSANI HAD MET WITH EUGENIO CEFIS, ONE OF WHOSE SONS IS IN C&L, AND HAD BEEN PROMISED SUPPORT.

6. WHAT IS NECESSARY ARE NEW PUBLIC MEDIA ARMS. A NON-CATHOLIC WEEKLY MAGAZINE IS DESPERATELY NEEDED. THE FAMIGLIA CRISTIANA REFUSES TO SUPPORT C&L AND EVEN IF IT WERE TO DO SO IT WOULD NOT GIVE THE MOVEMENT ACCESS TO THE SOCIAL GROUPS IT NEEDS. ANOTHER POWERFUL WEAPON IS THE NEW LOCAL RADIO STATION. C&L HAS ONE IN MILAN WHICH WAS VERY EXPENSIVE BUT IT ONLY HAS A RANGE OF 49 KILOMETERS. OTHERS ARE NEEDED FOR PROVINCIAL CAPITALS. GIUSSANI ALSO SAID THAT THE DISTRIBUTION OF FILMS IS IN THE HANDS OF LEFTISTS SO THAT CHRISTIAN MOVIES ARE NOT SHOWN.

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7. IN RESPONSE TO THE CONSUL GENERAL'S QUESTIONS AS TO HOW THE US COULD HELP THIS NEW CONTRIBUTION TO ITALIAN DEMOCRACY, GIUSSANI SAID THAT WE COULD HELP MUP. C&L SPECIFICALLY DOES NOT NEED ASSISTANCE, BUT WE COULD BE HELPFUL IN ASSISTING WITH THE FOUNDING OF THE PUBLIC MEDIA INSTITUTIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

8. IN A LONG SIDE DISSERTATION, GIUSSANI ATTRIBUTED THE DECLINE OF ACLI AS AN EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN ACTION GROUP TO THE INFLUENCE OF FUCI ADHERENTS IN THE ACLI STUDY CENTER. THESE LIKE OTHER POST-CONTESTAZIONE CATHOLIC LAY LEADERS MOVED ACLI AWAY FROM A POPULARLY ORIENTED ORGANIZATION WITH CLERICAL LEADERSHIP TO AN INTELLECTUAL ONE. THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO GO THEIR OWN WAY WHILE THESE MEN DEVELOP INTELLECTUAL THEORIES ON THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE. THEIR APPROACH IS THAT THE CHURCH SHOULD OPERATE IN THE FIELD OF PERSONAL RELIGION AND MORALS AND THAT SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE AN EMANATION OF PERSONAL BELIEFS: I.E. THE CHURCH SHOULD NOT TAKE DIRECT ACTION IN LAY SOCIETY. THIS IS MUCH TOO SUBJECTIVE FOR THE MASSES WHICH ARE NOT READY FOR SUCH FREEDOM IN ITALY, HE ARGUED. THE TRADITIONAL CHURCH FESTIVALS ARE BEING TAKEN OVER BY THE FESTIVALS OF THE PCI AND THE ONLY WAY FOR THE CHURCH TO REGAIN ANY INFLUENCE OVER THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF ITS ADHERENTS IS TO REVERT TO A POPULAR ORGANIZATION THAT WILL PROVIDE POSITIVE GUIDANCE IN AREAS THAT ARE NOT STRICTLY RELIGIOUS.

9. THE CEI HAS NOW BLESSED THE C&L AND THERE IS NO LONGER ANY HOSTILITY FROM THE BISHOPS. GIUSSANI SAID THAT CARDINAL COLOMBO IN MILAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE PRIME SUPPORTERS OF C&L AND IT WOULD NOT EXIST TODAY WERE IT NOT FOR HIS BACKING. (THIS IS NOT THE OPINION OF OTHERS, HOWEVER, WHO POINT OUT THAT THE CARDINAL HAS OPPOSED DON GIUSSANI'S RADICALISM AND HAS HERETOFORE BEEN VERY DUBIOUS ABOUT C&L.) THE MAIN REASONS FOR THE EARLIER ANTAGONISM ON THE PART OF THE HIERARCHY TOWARD C&L, HE SAID, WAS THE LATTER'S UNINTENDED BUT EFFECTIVE COMPETITION AND HENCE DILUTION OF CATHOLIC ACTION GROUPS. SINCE THEY NO LONGER EXIST AS MEANINGFUL ORGANIZATIONS THE BASIS FOR

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THE RESERVE OF THE CHURCH'S FORMAL STRUCTURE NO LONGER EXISTS.FINA

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